

WG 35. S. 301

AN ELEGY

Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. D. Jones,

OF CAERPHILLY,

WHO DIED AT SWANSEA, JULY 11, 1850, AGED 34 YEARS.

BY T. LEWIS,

LLANTHEWY.

“O fy mrawd, ti a ddiengaist
I'r ardal lonydd uwch y ser.”

ABERGAVENNY:
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M.DCCC.L.

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AN ELEGY.

ARGUMENT.

Exordium.—A reference made to Mr. Jones's early days.—His profession of religion.—His improvement.—His desire for useful knowledge.—His entrance into college.—His success there.—His departure.—His settlement at Llanthewy.—The success that attended his ministry.—His departure.—Death of his son.—Peace again restored.—The death of two of his sons.—His death, &c., &c.

THE king of day peeps o'er the eastern hills,
Bids nature wake, and rise from silent sleep,
And show the form divine from God she had;
His burning eye strikes terror through the shades
That once did rest on nature and on man.
In rapid haste I see them roll away,
Like mighty waves before the furious wind,
To the far west, to hide their gloomy forms.
The golden rays of that yon brilliant orb
Now gild the verdant meads, the brooks, the hills,
And paint the place where shades did rest before.
The day is come: the toiling swain goes forth

To labour hard, and earn his daily bread ;
The biting cold, the scorching heat he bears,
Until the time is come to rest in peace,
And find that boon which earth to him denied.

Such lab'rer was our friend, whose mem'ry still,
Like precious gems, shall never—ne'er be lost,
But kept by those that love the cause of God,
In early years himself he did devote
To his Creator—and to others' good ;
The golden moments that to him were sent
He did not waste in vanity and sin,
As myriads of our race are wont to do,
But to his Lord he them did fain restore—
Like active, faithful, and obedient son—
Luxuriant with the wealth of pious mind.
Religion was his friend in youthful days,
And in her ways he did delight to go
In quest of knowledge holy and divine ;
Humble and meek, he grew in love and grace,
Like noble student in the school of God,
That heaven had destin'd for a useful course.

Tired at last of wisdom's shallow streams,
Wherein in former years he had delight,
His panting soul made for the fountain-head
Of knowledge, wisdom, truth, and ancient lore,
Where deeper streams might quench his raging thirst ;
To pastures rich, by waters still and bright,

His soul was led by his kind Shepherd's care,
Wherein it grew, and waxed in mental strength,
And had such taste to those luxuriant fields
That smile beneath the silent dew of heaven,
That there his pious mind did ever rest.

His time expired; then from his quiet cell,
Where, free from earthly toil and anxious care,
He had prepared his mind for nobler work,
He issued forth and faced a frowning world.
Some of his friends he left behind, and some,
Like him, their exit took to distant spots,
To labour hard in their great Master's cause,
And ne'er to meet again till met in bliss,
To have their crown at their kind Saviour's hands.

Faithful he was to do the work of God
And preach the Gospel of eternal life;
Heaven's blessing crowned the labours of his hands,
And sinners brought to seek His pard'ning grace,
Whereby their precious souls are saved for aye.
The cause was raised—the few to many grew,
His ardent zeal, his placid mien, would win
Ev'n friendship from a foe—and all was love.
Smoothly along the surface of the deep
His smiling bark proceeded on its course,
The waves did smile, the gentle breeze did blow,
The light of day disclosed distant scenes.
Happy he was; in the meanwhile, howe'er,

The distant skies gave symptoms of exchange.
The far horizon wore its direful hue,
And fleecy clouds put on their gloomy dress.
The night is come, and storms with fury blow,
And threaten to engulf yon rocking bark,
Or drive it 'gainst the firm, eternal rock.
In spite of all, the little bark is safe,
Has triumph'd o'er the winds and noisy waves,
And still glides on towards the haven of peace.

Sweet calm is now restored, and all is well,
And in his bosom dwells the peace of God
The same as heretofore. This blissful state,
Howe'er, was soon disturb'd by sudden death,
That took away a well beloved son,
To him no loss, but rather glorious gain,
To part with earth and enter into bliss.

Once more the storm is o'er, and summer days
Return afresh to gladden all the scene.
The king of terrors and the foe of man,—
But not of those who are the friends of God,—
Retraced his former steps in search of prey,
And soon disturb'd the sweet domestic joy.
The father's care, the mother's tender cries,
Had no effect on death, the iron foe;
His work he did, and two he snatch'd away
To join their dear brother in the skies,
Where joy eternal glides around the throne.

But nearer still it came. Death, the grim foe,
That had before hewn down the younger plants,
Look'd higher now, and fell'd the stock from which
The others grew—the father is no more!

“Dear friend (for still I fain would talk to thee) !
Shall I discern thy cheering face no more ?
And must thy gladd'ning voice no more be heard ?
And when I visit thy much-loved abode,
Shall I not find thee there as heretofore ?
No! this is past, nor aught seems left for me,
Except to walk and sigh upon thy tomb !
O Thou, great Arbiter of life and death,
Thy ways are just, and true, and wise, and good ;
Though clouds and darkness compass thee around,
Justice and judgment still support Thy throne !”
Since God is just and good why should we grieve ?
Shall He not take to Him what is His own ?
Shall He not crown His servant in the skies
Who had on earth his Master's glory sought ?
He shall ; then learn to say with him of old—
“The Lord is good, I know His sacred ways,
Oh, let Him do what's righteous in His sight.”

What is the Christian's death ? The freedom of
The captiv'd soul that long'd to be with Christ.
What is the Christian's death ? The restoration
Of the lone exile to his native land,
Which he had wish'd ten thousand times before.

What is the Christian's death? It is his life
And swift ascent from toils to pure joys,
Which feeble man can never comprehend.
The happy soul, full of the love of God,
And glad to leave behind this cumbrous earth,
Mounts on angelic wings, and speeds her course
To join bright seraphs in the world of day,
Where also dwell the ransom'd of the Lamb.
"There, on his radiant throne, we may discern
Our lost companion, 'mid the ransom'd throng,
Clad in that robe which sovereign mercy wrought,
Wash'd in that fountain sovereign love unseal'd,
Not like his former self, imperfect, weak,
But without spot or wrinkle—purified
From sin's polluting taint, and thus prepared
For the associates and pursuits of heaven."

Then do not weep, like those that have no hope
Of meeting their departed friends again ;
We shall be raised from death's unseen domain,
And meet before the throne of God in bliss.